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Senate

The Senate met at 11:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will come to order. The Chaplain will now deliver the opening prayer.

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, we praise You for Your grace and goodness. You will what is best for us as individuals and as a nation. You desire to bless us with the wisdom and discernment we need to solve our Nation's problems. And yet, we have learned that You wait for us to ask for Your help. By Your providence You have placed the Senators in positions of great authority not just because of their human abilities, but because they are willing to seek and follow Your guidance. Together, with one mind and heart, we intercede for one another across party lines and ideological differences. We know that if we trust You, You will be on time and in time to help us with crucial discussions and decisions today. Give us the courage to put the needs of the Nation first above political advantage. You have promised that if we pray with complete trust in You, You will intervene to answer our prayers. In the name of the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 1 p.m. Following morning business, the Senate expects to begin consideration of S.

767, the uniformed services tax filing fairness bill. Passage of that bill is expected, and it will then be the leader's intention to begin consideration of the budget resolution conference report. There are 10 hours for debate on the conference report, but it is hoped that a significant portion of that time will be yielded back. Therefore, Members should expect rollcall votes throughout today's session of the Senate.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk (Kathleen Alvarez Tritak) proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUTCHINSON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business not to extend beyond 1 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each, with the following exceptions: Senator BROWBACK, 20 minutes; Senator BAYH, 10 minutes; Senators DOMENICI and WELLSTONE, 15 minutes total; Senator LEAHY, 15 minutes; and Senator CLELAND, 15 minutes.

The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

KOSOVO

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, not very long ago it would have been difficult to

find anyone in this country who had heard of Kosovo, that part of the former Yugoslavia which is today engulfed in a humanitarian calamity and where NATO is conducting the first combat operation in its 50 year history.

During the past three weeks we have watched the catastrophe in Kosovo unfold. Over 600,000 Kosovar-Albanians have fled their homes or been herded onto trains with little more than the shirts on their backs, simply because of their ethnicity and because they are Muslim.

Today they are struggling to survive in the mud and squalor of camps in Macedonia and Albania, or in third countries. Families have been torn apart. Men and boys have been taken away and their fate is unknown. Women and girls have been raped. Children have been lost or abandoned.

Another 200-500,000 people are said to be displaced inside Kosovo, with little access to food or medicine. Luckily it is not winter, but it is still a humanitarian disaster on a scale not seen in Europe for half a century.

I supported NATO's decision to attack Serbian President Milosevic's forces.

We could debate how we got to this point, about the way the negotiations were handled at Rambouillet and whether he might have refrained from invading Kosovo had the diplomacy been conducted differently.

Legitimate questions have been asked about whether the ultimatum put to the Serbs at Rambouillet, which would have led to the partition of their country, was realistic or sustainable. Many knowledgeable people have argued that administration officials did not fully understand the history of the former Yugoslavia or the importance of Kosovo to the Serbs, that they seriously underestimated Milosevic, took a bad situation and have made it worse.

We could also ask whether our relations with Russia, which have been badly damaged in recent weeks, could

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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